

**The United Methodist Church at Absecon**

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# Unlikely Courage: The Women at the Cross

March 22, 2026

Today's Lay Reader: Naamah Leary

**Welcome**

**Prelude**

Shepherd of Love

**Call to Worship**

**Leader:** Come! Come from our sanctuary or from your home. Come at 11 AM on Sunday or any time during the week. Come whenever and wherever you are. Come! Worship is called in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!

**People:** **We come, ready to answer God's call to discipleship.**

**Leader:** Faith required both love and courage. Would we love Jesus enough, and be courageous enough to follow him all the way to the cross?

**People:** **True discipleship means we never leave him. But it also means we then share him. We must be loving and courageous enough to never leave our neighbor.**

## Hymn

## How Firm a Foundation

(verses 1, 2, and 5)

1. How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
 2. "Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,  
 3. "When through the deep waters I call thee to go,  
 4. "When through fiery trials thy pathways shall lie,  
 5. "The soul that on Je - sus still leans for re - pose,

is laid for your faith in his ex - cel - lent word!  
 for I am thy God and will still give thee aid;  
 the riv - ers of woe shall not thee o - ver - flow;  
 my grace, all - suf - fi - cient, shall be thy sup - ply;  
 I will not, I will not de - sert to its foes;

What more can he say than to you he hath said,  
 I'll strength - en and help thee, and cause thee to stand  
 for I will be with thee, thy trou - bles to bless,  
 the flame shall not hurt thee; I on - ly de - sign  
 that soul, though all hell should en - deav - or to shake,

to you who for ref - uge to Je - sus have fled?  
 up - held by my righ - teous, om - ni - po - tent hand.  
 and sanc - ti - fy to thee thy deep - est dis - tress.  
 thy dross to con - sume, and thy gold to re - fine.  
 I'll nev - er, no, nev - er, no, nev - er for - sake."

## Opening Prayer

God, thank you for the opportunity to explore what true discipleship looks like. Using the women at the cross as a great example, we ask that you open our hearts and minds to all that we can learn from their courage. Help this church be a community of courageous disciples, learning and loving together this Lenten season. Amen.

## Pastoral Prayer

## The Lord's Prayer

## Hymn

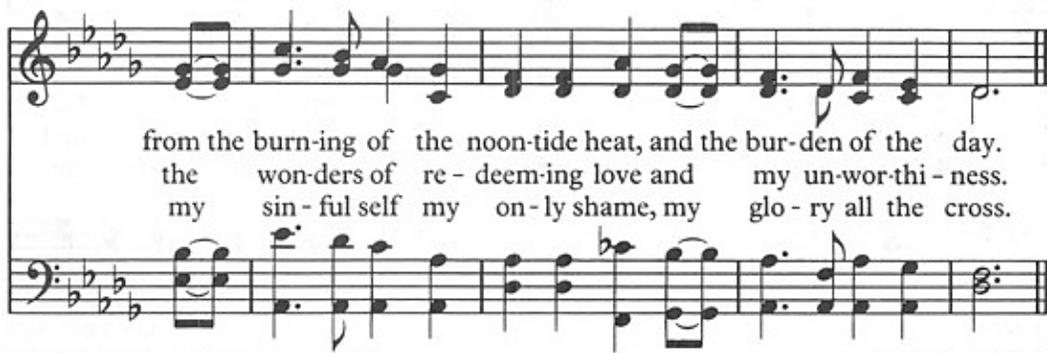
## Beneath the Cross of Jesus

1. Be - neath the cross of Je - sus I fain would take my stand,  
2. Up - on that cross of Je - sus mine eye at times can see  
3. I take, O cross, thy shad - ow for my a - bid - ing place;

the shad - ow of a might - y rock with - in a wea - ry land;  
the ver - y dy - ing form of One who suf - fered there for me;  
I ask no oth - er sun - shine than the sun - shine of his face;

a home with - in the wil - der - ness, a rest up - on the way,  
and from my strick - en heart with tears two won - ders I con - fess:  
con - tent to let the world go by, to know no gain nor loss,

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Beneath the Cross of Jesus'. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line of each system.



**Senior Choir**

**Thank You for the Valleys**

**Cindy Berry**

**Young Disciples Chatting with the Rev**

**Scripture Lesson**

**Mark 15:40-41**

There were also women looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome, who followed him when he was in Galilee and ministered to him, and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

**Leader:** The Word of God for the people of God

**People:** **Thanks be to God**

**Message**

*Unlikely Courage:*

*The Women at the Cross*

**Offering Ourselves and Our Gifts to God**

**Offertory**

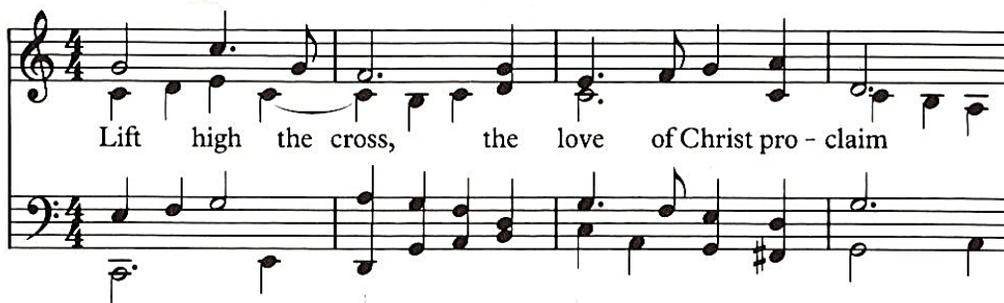
**Be Not Afraid**

**Douglas Wagner**

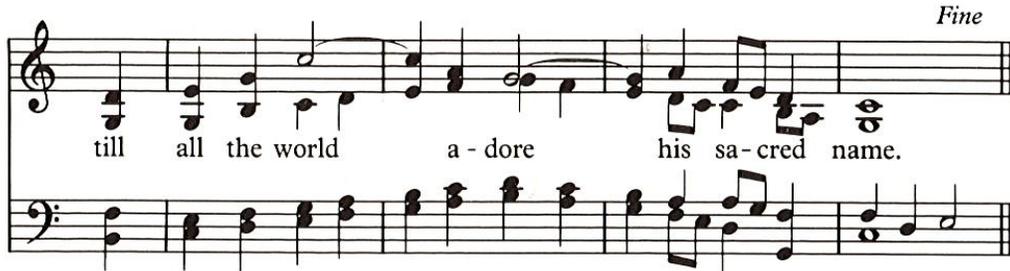
**Offertory Hymn**

**Lift High the Cross**

*(verse 1)*

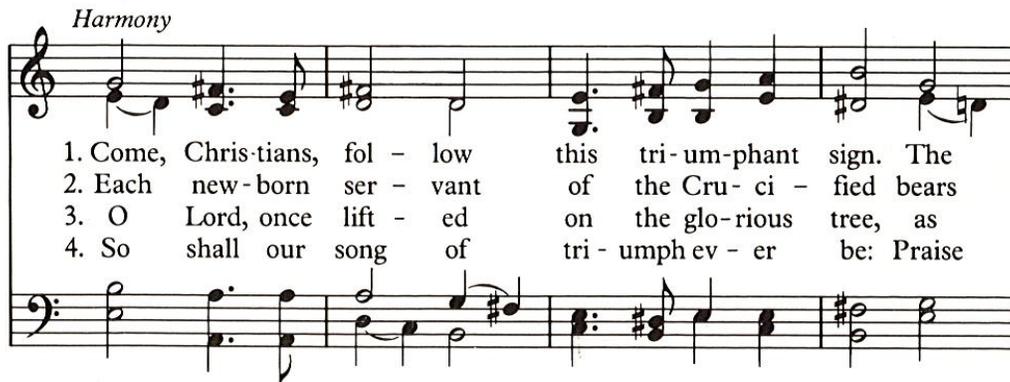


*Fine*



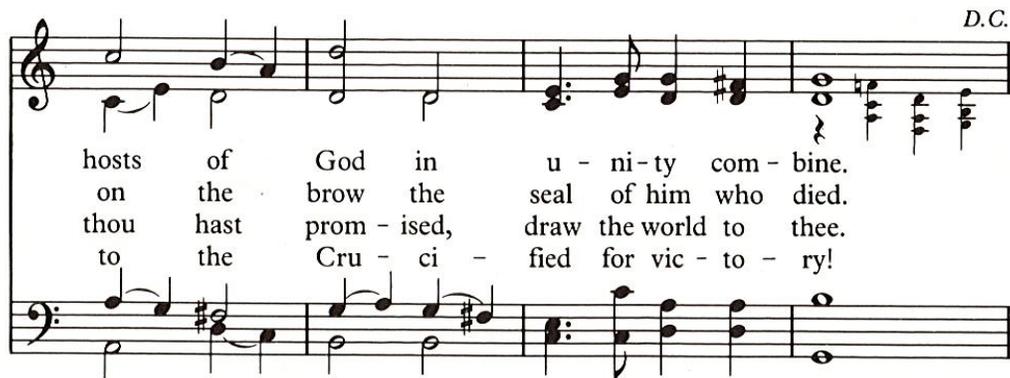
till all the world a-dore his sa-cred name.

*Harmony*

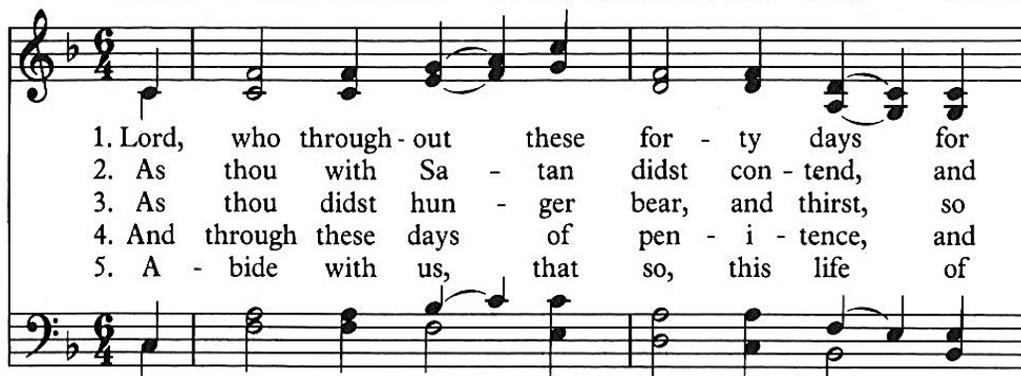


1. Come, Chris-tians, fol - low this tri-um-phant sign. The  
 2. Each new-born ser - vant of the Cru - ci - fied bears  
 3. O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo-rious tree, as  
 4. So shall our song of tri - umph ev - er be: Praise

*D.C.*



hosts of God in u - ni-ty com - bine.  
 on the brow the seal of him who died.  
 thou hast prom - ised, draw the world to thee.  
 to the Cru - ci - fied for vic - to - ry!

**Hymn****Lord, Who Throughout These 40 Days**


1. Lord, who through - out these for - ty days for  
 2. As thou with Sa - tan didst con - tend, and  
 3. As thou didst hun - ger bear, and thirst, so  
 4. And through these days of pen - i - tence, and  
 5. A - bide with us, that so, this life of

us didst fast and pray, teach us with thee to  
 didst the vic - tory win, O give us strength in  
 teach us, gra - cious Lord, to die to self, and  
 through thy pas - sion - tide, yea, ev - er - more in  
 suf - fer - ing o - ver past, an Eas - ter of un -

mourn our sins and close by thee to stay.  
 thee to fight, in thee to con - quer sin.  
 chief - ly live by thy most ho - ly word.  
 life and death, Je - sus, with us a - bide.  
 end - ing joy we may at - tain at last.

**Benediction****Postlude****Chaconne**

Louis Couperin